

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
Minutes
September 5, 2012

Board Attendance Record

William Dryburgh (94/104)
Vacant
Maria Greenberg (29/34)
Lou Spacco (27/29)
John Hitzel (28/29)
Fred Pazona (16/21)
Katherine Ariens (17/18)

Present

William Dryburgh
Maria Greenberg
Lou Spacco
John Hitzel
Fred Pazona
Katherine Ariens

County Representatives

Andy Stevens, Interim Director/Parks & Natural Resources
Janette Knowlton, CAO
Bob Starr, Commission Liaison
Todd Taylor, Financial Consultant
Lacey Miranda, South County Recreation Center
Bonnie Blair, Administrative Assistant II

Guest

Commissioner Chris Constance
Mrs. Jean Marie Berlin
Mrs. Cathy Pickett
Bill Martino, BMX representative
Terry Donley, BMX representative

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bill Dryburgh at 1:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

1. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the August 1, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved.

2. Division Reports

Reports were distributed by email to members before the meeting.

- John Hitzel – FRPA, Ambassador Program, Tippecanoe Trail Run, Fire Buffer lines, Baseline Species Survey at Englewood Beach
- Katherine Ariens – New Vertical Rock Wall at South County Recreation Center

3. New Business

- Skate Park & BMX Bikes – Mrs. Berlin
 - Mrs. Berlin attended the September 5th Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting with her daughter, Cathy Pickett. She explained that she just wanted to fulfill the wishes of her husband by keeping it a skate park, which is what he intended when it was built.
 - Cathy Pickett disagreed and relayed that she feels her mother is hyper critical of the bikers. Cathy believes bikers should be allowed to use the skate park but would like to see a structured program or sessions with scheduled times.
 - Andy Stevens talked about the BMX Expo and from a recreational standpoint, it went very well. Some of the 40 BMX'rs were in their 40's, brought their kids and wives, spend money, bought food and gas, which was good for the county.
 - Katherine Ariens reported that she attended the Expo and that there were 10 people from Sarasota area and the rest were local. If they were allowed one day a week, like a Tuesday, it would be scheduled and there won't be any conflicts because everyone will know. Katherine also relayed what she had learned about the BMX bikes and the kids that were at the Expo. She said they did fabulous, were very courteous, kind, generous, outstanding young men. The determination of these bikers coming before us for 5 months now says a lot. It is a dream

for them and they would be very grateful if it was allowed. A representative from Team Pain relayed to Katherine that if the bikers were allowed to ride for free, he would be available to fix any damage.

- Mrs. Berlin felt there were some issues at the Expo: some unsafe situations, boys didn't like to be told what to do with their bikes regarding possible, and the Expo was on the weekend and there were a lot of skateboarders at the park.
 - After much discussion, Mrs. Berlin agreed to let BMX bikers use the Skate Park.
- ***A motion to allow BMX bikes at the J.M. Berlin/Rotary Skate Park every Tuesday and the last Sunday of each month for a 4 month trial period, with hours of 11 am to 8 pm, was made by John Hitzel, seconded by Maria Greenberg, and unanimously approved.***
- Terry Donley and Bill Martino, who attended the meeting in support of the BMX bikers, agreed that one day a week and a Sunday would be great.
 - Mrs. Berlin stated that she wants to supply a shade screen and bleachers at the Skate Park. She asked about the security cameras and who was monitoring them. It was determined that staff at Oyster Creek Pool monitor them during the hours that the pool is open, but the pictures were very grainy and it is hard to identify anyone in them.
 - The condition of the bowls will be monitored. Andy Stevens, working with the attorneys office, will install signs that say "under surveillance" to deter vandalism. Sarasota County has been doing it and has had success with them.
 - Commissioner Constance visited the facility and feels it is a wonderful addition to the park and he thanked Mrs. Berlin.
 - Outside of the conference room, Mr. Donley and Mr. Martino thanked Mrs. Berlin for the opportunity.
- **Geocaching**
- Huge for Parks & Recreation especially in West County at Amberjack Environmental Park. People come from all over the country especially Canada. Items are hidden, their location is tracked on a GPS and then people go and find them.
 - Lou Spacco talked about the website GeoCaching.com
 - Commissioner Constance talked about buying trinkets and hiding them in all of our parks.

4. Old Business

- **Community Garden Report – Lacey Miranda, South County Recreation Center**
- Lacey runs the Community Garden and relayed that they are ready to start the new planting season of 21 beds with 40 gardeners for the year.
 - Beds are 3 ½' by 20' and most are divided in two to accommodate more gardeners; this year there are 29 plots available. Still waiting for some of last year's participants to return Lacey's calls for this year.
 - Gardening 101 classes in September by the Master Gardeners Program will be encouraged this year. An Anniversary Party is scheduled for December.
 - The garden is open 24 hrs. a day; there has been no trouble with having the gate unlocked. Beds are not allowed to be fallow for more than three weeks.
 - Lacey commented that the garden has acquired a shed from Keep Charlotte Beautiful.
 - Commissioner Constance felt a better system would be for everyone to get a ½ bed to start, and then draw for the full beds.
 - Katherine Ariens suggested a lottery system each year so as not to show favoritism. Lacey felt it is a good idea, but she feared losing great gardeners. Katherine felt that it is not a good reason not to have a lottery system so that more people can experience the garden.
 - Lacey related that there is another smaller garden at the Family Services Center and Punta

Gorda is researching at starting a Community Garden.

▪ **Parking Meter Update – Andy Stevens**

- There have been some difficulties with the North meter at Englewood Beach and they had to be shut down; the company representative came out to realign the sensors on the roof.

5. Sports Council Update

- Youth Sports Council's next meeting is set for September 12th at 5:45 p.m. at Mid-County Regional Library, Administration Conference Room. Maria Greenberg reported that it was a short meeting last month and she plans on attending next week.

6. Member Issues

- Lou Spacco noted that he appreciated the use of Tringali and Mid County Regional Library for the elections; it was an enjoyable experience working with the Parks & Recreation department.
- Fred Pazona notices a lot more activity at the pool and mentioned the new geo thermal unit. He asked about the Interlocal Agreement with the school, are we charging them? Yes, they will be billed this year.
- Bill Dryburgh spoke about the Event Center, noting that SMG is doing a great job.

7. Interim Director's Report – Andy Stevens

- There was lots of activity Labor Day weekend.
- Working with Amanda Carr, we would love to get a National BMX event into Charlotte County
- Snowbird Classic - many improvements were made to the fields which will have additional Division 1 teams and the Air Force Academy. Maintenance of the fields is being discussed.
 - Commissioner Constance asked, do rentals cover the expenses of the maintenance and operations for the fields. Andy Stevens replied that probably not but it is still unbelievable to have the Classic in Charlotte County.
- There have been no issues with the drinking ban at Bayshore Live Oak Park or McGuire Park.
- John Hitzel – anything on the horizon for the Sports Park and Spring Training -Yankees will be here and the games generate a lot of economic impact to the county.

8. Citizen Input - None

9. Announcements

- The next meeting will be our Joint meeting with the Beaches & Shores and MAC. Please email any agenda items to the recording secretary.

10. Upcoming Events - Events as listed on the Agenda

Meeting Adjourned

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 2:13 p.m.

CC: Commissioner Robert Skidmore, District 1
Commissioner Chris Constance, District 2
Commissioner Robert Starr, District 3
Commissioner Stephen Deutsch, District 4
Commissioner Tricia Duffy, District 5
Raymond Sandroock, Administrator
Kelly Shoemaker, Assistant County Administrator